Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~processor, the processor implemented as a three way~~ superscalar, pipelined processor ~~architecture~~, the processor comprising:

an out-of-order microinstruction pointer (μIP) stack for storing pointers in a microcode (μcode) execution core, a plurality of the pointers associated with a common instruction that is decoded into a plurality of micro ops, the plurality of pointers placed on the out-of order microinstruction pointer stack and removed from the microinstruction pointer stack before it is known if a sequence of microinstructions pointed to by the plurality of pointers is valid.

2. (Previously presented) The processor of claim 1 in which entries in the μIP stack comprise:

an entry number field;

a microinstruction pointer (μIP) field;

a back pointer field;

a retirement indicator field; and

a return pointer field.

3. (Original) The processor of claim 2 in which the μIP field is 14-bits wide.

4. (Previously presented) The processor of claim 3 in which the μIP field has a microinstruction pointer (μIP) pushed by a first microoperation (μOp) code of the plurality of micro ops and used by a second μOp code of the plurality of micro ops.

5. (Original) The processor of claim 2 in which the back pointer field has a pointer to a next entry in the μIP stack for a micro-type of service (μTOS) bit to point to after a μOp.

6. (Original) The processor of claim 2 in which the retirement indicator field has an indication of whether an entry has retired.

7. (Original) The processor of claim 2 in the return pointer field a pointer to a location in a retirement stack to which an entry is copied after being retired.

8. (Previously presented) A method executed in a ~~processor, the processor implemented as a three-way~~ superscalar, pipelined processor ~~architecture~~, the method comprising:

executing microcode (μcode) addressed by pointers stored in an out-of-order microinstruction pointer (μIP) stack, a plurality of pointers associated with a common instruction that is decoded into a plurality of micro ops, the plurality of pointers placed on the out-of-order microinstruction pointer stack and removed from the microinstruction pointer stack before it is known if a sequence of microinstructions pointed to by the plurality of pointers is valid; and

manipulating the μIP stack with a set of microinstructions.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8 in which entries in the stack have an entry number field, a microinstruction pointer (μIP) field, a back pointer field, a retirement indicator field and a return pointer field.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which the μIP pointer field is 14-bits wide.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10 in which the μIP pointer field has a microinstruction pointer (μIP) pushed by a first microoperation (μOp) code of the plurality of micro ops and used by a second μOp code of the plurality of micro ops.

12. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which the back pointer field has a pointer to a next entry in the μIP stack for a micro-type of service (μTOS) bit to point to after a μOp.

13. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which the retirement indicator field has an indication of whether an entry has retired.

14. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which the return pointer field contains a pointer to a location in a retirement stack to which an entry is copied after being retired.

15. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which manipulating comprises:
pushing a next μIP on to the μIP stack; and
using the next μIP in an intermediate field as a target μIP in a jump operation.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9 in which manipulating comprises:
taking a value of an intermediate field of a microoperation (μOp) of the plurality of micro ops; and
pushing the value on to the μIP stack.

17. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which manipulating comprises:
popping a value off the μIP stack; and
replacing a current μOp intermediate field.

18. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which manipulating comprises:
popping a value off of the μIP stack; and
jumping to that value.

19. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which manipulating comprises:
reading a value off the μIP stack; and

replacing a μOp's intermediate field with the value.

20. (Original) The method of claim 9 in which manipulating comprises setting the μIP stack pointers to reset.

21. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising providing a set of pointers that point to different entries in the μIP stack.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21 in which the set of pointers includes a μTOS pointer that points to a top of the μIP stack.

23. (Original) The method of claim 21 in which the set of pointers includes a μAlloc pointer that points to a next allocated entry in the μIP stack.

24. (Original) The method of claim 21 in which the set of pointers includes a NextRet pointer that points to a next entry in the μIP stack to be deallocated.

25. (Original) The method of claim 21 in which the set of pointers includes μRetTos pointer that points at a retired top of the μIP stack.

26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8 in which the μOPs of the plurality of micro ops include an ms_call μOP that takes a next μIP, pushes the next μIP on the μIP stack, and uses the next μIP in an intermediate field as a target μIP of a jump.

27. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8 in which the μOPs of the plurality of micro ops include an ms_push μOP that takes a value in an intermediate field and pushes the value on the μIP stack.

28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8 in which the μOPs of the plurality of micro ops include an ms_pop μOP that pops a value off the μIP stack and replaces the value with the μOP's intermediate field.

29. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8 in which the μOPs of the plurality of micro ops include an ms_return μOP that pops a value off of the μIP stack and jumps to that μIP.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8 in which the μOPs of the plurality of micro ops include an ms_tos_read μOP that reads a value off the μIP stack and replaces this μOP's intermediate field.

31. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8 in which the μOPs of the plurality of micro ops include an ms_μip_stack_clear μOP that sets the μIP stack pointers to reset.

32. (Previously presented) A computer program product residing on a computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon which, when executed by the processor, cause the processor to:

execute microcode (μcode) addressed through pointers stored in an out-of-order microinstruction pointer (μIP) stack, a plurality of the pointers associated with a common instruction that is decoded into a plurality of micro ops, the plurality of pointers placed on the out-of-order microinstruction pointer stack and removed from the microinstruction pointer stack before it is known if a sequence of microinstructions pointed to by the plurality of pointers is valid; and

manipulate the μIP stack with a set of microinstructions.

33. (Original) The computer program product of claim 32 wherein instructions to manipulate further comprise instructions to:

push a next μIP on to the μIP stack; and

use the next μIP in an intermediate field as a target μIP in a jump operation.

34. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 32 wherein instructions to manipulate further comprise instructions to:

take a value of an intermediate field of a microoperation (μOp) of the plurality of micro ops; and

push the value on to the μIP stack.

35. (Original) The computer program product of claim 32 wherein instructions to manipulate further comprise instructions to:

pop a value off the μIP stack; and

replace a current μOp intermediate field with the value.

36. (Original) The computer program product of claim 32 wherein instructions to manipulate further comprise instructions to:

pop a value off of the μIP stack; and

jump to that value.

37. (Original) The computer program product of claim 32 wherein instructions to manipulate further comprise instructions to:

read a value off the μIP stack; and

replace a μOp's intermediate field with the value.

38. (Original) The computer program product of claim 32 wherein instructions to manipulate further comprise instructions to:

set the μIP stack pointers to reset.